

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA  
Richmond Division

JUSTIN CORNELL, No. 1738299,  
Petitioner,

v.

Civil Action No.: 3:21cv593

DIRECTOR,  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS,  
Respondent.

PROPOSED FIRST AMENDED PETITION  
FOR WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS

AO 241 (Rev. 09/17)

**PETITION UNDER 28 U.S.C. § 2254 FOR WRIT OF  
HABEAS CORPUS BY A PERSON IN STATE CUSTODY**

United States District Court		District: <u>Eastern District of Virginia</u>
Name (under which you were convicted): <u>Justin Cornell</u>		Docket or Case No.:
Place of Confinement: <u>Lawrenceville Correctional Center</u>		Prisoner No.: <u>1738299</u>
Petitioner (include the name under which you were convicted) <u>Justin Cornell</u>		Respondent (authorized person having custody of petitioner) v. <u>Harold Clarke, Director</u> <u>V.D.O.C.</u>
The Attorney General of the State of: <u>Virginia</u>		

**PETITION**

- (a) Name and location of court that entered the judgment of conviction you are challenging:  
Circuit Court of Virginia Beach  
2425 Nimmo Parkway  
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

(b) Criminal docket or case number (if you know): CR15-3376
- (a) Date of the judgment of conviction (if you know): 05/27/2016

(b) Date of sentencing: 11/16/2016
- Length of sentence: 40 years
- In this case, were you convicted on more than one count or of more than one crime? ☐ Yes ☒ No
- Identify all crimes of which you were convicted and sentenced in this case:  
Second Degree Murder
- (a) What was your plea? (Check one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (1) Not guilty	<input type="checkbox"/> (3) Nolo contendere (no contest)
<input type="checkbox"/> (2) Guilty	<input type="checkbox"/> (4) Insanity plea

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(b) If you entered a guilty plea to one count or charge and a not guilty plea to another count or charge, what did you plead guilty to and what did you plead not guilty to? Not Applicable - N/A

(c) If you went to trial, what kind of trial did you have? (Check one)

☒ Jury ☐ Judge only

7. Did you testify at a pretrial hearing, trial, or a post-trial hearing?

☐ Yes ☒ No

8. Did you appeal from the judgment of conviction?

☒ Yes ☐ No

9. If you did appeal, answer the following:

(a) Name of court: Virginia Court of Appeals ("VACO")

(b) Docket or case number (if you know): 2007-16-1

(c) Result: Denied

(d) Date of result (if you know): 06/30/2017

(e) Citation to the case (if you know): N/A

(f) Grounds raised: See attached.

(g) Did you seek further review by a higher state court? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, answer the following:

(1) Name of court: Supreme Court of Virginia ("SCOVA")

(2) Docket or case number (if you know): 171695

(3) Result: Denied Review

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(4) Date of result (if you know):

10/05/2018

(5) Citation to the case (if you know):

N/A

(6) Grounds raised:

See attached.

(h) Did you file a petition for certiorari in the United States Supreme Court?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, answer the following:

(1) Docket or case number (if you know):

18-8244

(2) Result:

Denied Review.

(3) Date of result (if you know):

04/15/2019

(4) Citation to the case (if you know):

UNKNOWN

10. Other than the direct appeals listed above, have you previously filed any other petitions, applications, or motions concerning this judgment of conviction in any state court?

☒ Yes ☐ No

11. If your answer to Question 10 was "Yes," give the following information:

(a) (1) Name of court:

Supreme Court of Virginia

(2) Docket or case number (if you know):

171695

(3) Date of filing (if you know):

08/03/2018

(4) Nature of the proceeding:

Motion to Amend Writ of Error

(5) Grounds raised:

See attached.

(6) Did you receive a hearing where evidence was given on your petition, application, or motion?

☐ Yes ☒ No

(7) Result:

Denied to Grant Review

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(8) Date of result (if you know): 08/16/2018

(b) If you filed any second petition, application, or motion, give the same information:

(1) Name of court: Circuit Court of Virginia Beach

(2) Docket or case number (if you know): CL19-5935

(3) Date of filing (if you know): 10-04-2019

(4) Nature of the proceeding: Petition For Writ of Habeas Corpus

(5) Grounds raised: See attached.

(6) Did you receive a hearing where evidence was given on your petition, application, or motion?

☐ Yes ☒ No

(7) Result: Nonsuit-voluntary by Petitioner

(8) Date of result (if you know):

(c) If you filed any third petition, application, or motion, give the same information:

(1) Name of court: Supreme Court of Virginia

(2) Docket or case number (if you know):

(3) Date of filing (if you know):

(4) Nature of the proceeding: Petition For Writ of Habeas Corpus

(5) Grounds raised: See attached.

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(6) Did you receive a hearing where evidence was given on your petition, application, or motion?

☐ Yes ☐ No Pending

(7) Result: Pending

(8) Date of result (if you know): Pending

(d) Did you appeal to the highest state court having jurisdiction over the action taken on your petition, application, or motion?

(1) First petition: ☒ Yes ☐ No

(2) Second petition: ☒ Yes ☐ No

(3) Third petition: ☒ Yes ☐ No

(e) If you did not appeal to the highest state court having jurisdiction, explain why you did not:

N/A

12.

For this petition, state every ground on which you claim that you are being held in violation of the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States. Attach additional pages if you have more than four grounds. State the facts supporting each ground. Any legal arguments must be submitted in a separate memorandum.

**CAUTION:** To proceed in the federal court, you must ordinarily first exhaust (use up) your available state-court remedies on each ground on which you request action by the federal court. Also, if you fail to set forth all the grounds in this petition, you may be barred from presenting additional grounds at a later date.

GROUND ONE:

See attached.

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):

(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground One, explain why:

N/A

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## (c) Direct Appeal of Ground One:

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue?

☒ Yes ☐ No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why:

N/A

## (d) Post-Conviction Proceedings:

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

☐ Yes ☒ No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition:

N/A

Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed:

Docket or case number (if you know):

Date of the court's decision:

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available):

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state:

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed:

Docket or case number (if you know):

Date of the court's decision:

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available):

(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue:

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(e) Other Remedies: Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground One: \_\_\_\_\_

GROUND TWO:

See attached.

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):

(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground Two, explain why:

N/A

(c) Direct Appeal of Ground Two:

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue?

☒

Yes

☐

No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why:

N/A

(d) Post-Conviction Proceedings:

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

☐ Yes

☒ No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition:

N/A

Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed:

Docket or case number (if you know):



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Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state:

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(e) Other Remedies: Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground Two: N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

GROUND THREE:

See attached.

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground Three, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) **Direct Appeal of Ground Three:**

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue? ☒ Yes ☐ No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why: N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(d) **Post-Conviction Proceedings:**

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

☐ Yes ☒ No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state:

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(e) **Other Remedies:** Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground Three: N/A

**GROUND FOUR:** N/A

(a) Supporting facts (Do not argue or cite law. Just state the specific facts that support your claim.):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(b) If you did not exhaust your state remedies on Ground Four, explain why: N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(c) **Direct Appeal of Ground Four:**

(1) If you appealed from the judgment of conviction, did you raise this issue?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(2) If you did not raise this issue in your direct appeal, explain why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(d) **Post-Conviction Proceedings:**

(1) Did you raise this issue through a post-conviction motion or petition for habeas corpus in a state trial court?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(2) If your answer to Question (d)(1) is "Yes," state:

Type of motion or petition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Name and location of the court where the motion or petition was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Did you receive a hearing on your motion or petition? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) Did you appeal from the denial of your motion or petition? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes ☐ No

(5) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," did you raise this issue in the appeal? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes ☐ No

(6) If your answer to Question (d)(4) is "Yes," state: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and location of the court where the appeal was filed: \_\_\_\_\_

Docket or case number (if you know): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the court's decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Result (attach a copy of the court's opinion or order, if available): \_\_\_\_\_

(7) If your answer to Question (d)(4) or Question (d)(5) is "No," explain why you did not raise this issue: \_\_\_\_\_

(e) **Other Remedies:** Describe any other procedures (such as habeas corpus, administrative remedies, etc.) that you have used to exhaust your state remedies on Ground Four: \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Please answer these additional questions about the petition you are filing:

- (a) Have all grounds for relief that you have raised in this petition been presented to the highest state court having jurisdiction? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If your answer is "No," state which grounds have not been so presented and give your reason(s) for not presenting them:

- (b) Is there any ground in this petition that has not been presented in some state or federal court? If so, which ground or grounds have not been presented, and state your reasons for not presenting them:

No.

14. Have you previously filed any type of petition, application, or motion in a federal court regarding the conviction that you challenge in this petition? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes," state the name and location of the court, the docket or case number, the type of proceeding, the issues raised, the date of the court's decision, and the result for each petition, application, or motion filed. Attach a copy of any court opinion or order, if available.

15. Do you have any petition or appeal now pending (filed and not decided yet) in any court, either state or federal, for the judgment you are challenging? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If "Yes," state the name and location of the court, the docket or case number, the type of proceeding, and the issues raised.

Supreme Court of Virginia; 100 N. 9<sup>TH</sup> Street,  
Richmond, VA 23219; Record No. 211062; Petition For  
Writ of Habeas Corpus; Ineffective Assistance of Counsel; Prosecutor  
Misconduct Violating Due Process; Abuse of Judicial Discretion  
Violating Due Process. See 11(b)(5) Attachments pp 5-8.

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16. Give the name and address, if you know, of each attorney who represented you in the following stages of the judgment you are challenging:

(a) At preliminary hearing: Vaughan Jones, 1622 West Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23220

(b) At arraignment and plea: Vaughan Jones, 1622 West Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23220

(c) At trial: Vaughan Jones, 1622 West Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23220

(d) At sentencing: Dizelle Morris, 101 Northfield Street  
Suite B, Chesapeake, VA 23320

(e) On appeal: Ron Reel, 212 Eureka Avenue  
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

(f) In any post-conviction proceeding: N/A

(g) On appeal from any ruling against you in a post-conviction proceeding: N/A

17. Do you have any future sentence to serve after you complete the sentence for the judgment that you are challenging? ☐ Yes ☒ No

(a) If so, give name and location of court that imposed the other sentence you will serve in the future:

(b) Give the date the other sentence was imposed:

(c) Give the length of the other sentence:

(d) Have you filed, or do you plan to file, any petition that challenges the judgment or sentence to be served in the future? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. TIMELINESS OF PETITION: If your judgment of conviction became final over one year ago, you must explain why the one-year statute of limitations as contained in 28 U.S.C. § 2244(d) does not bar your petition.\*

This petition is timely filed. The 1-year period (per AEDPA)  
began on 6/17/2019, the date SCOTUS denied rehearing  
the direct appeal certiorari. On 8/29/2019, 73 days later,  
the time was tolled by a "properly filed" State Habeas  
Corpus Petition in the Virginia Beach Circuit Court (VBCC),

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leaving 292 days. Voluntary Nonsuit by VBCC ended the tolling period on July 30, 2021. This petition is timely filed any time before May 18, 2022.

\* The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 ("AEDPA") as contained in 28 U.S.C. § 2244(d) provides in part that:

- (1) A one-year period of limitation shall apply to an application for a writ of habeas corpus by a person in custody pursuant to the judgment of a State court. The limitation period shall run from the latest of -
  - (A) the date on which the judgment became final by the conclusion of direct review or the expiration of the time for seeking such review;
  - (B) the date on which the impediment to filing an application created by State action in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States is removed, if the applicant was prevented from filing by such state action;
  - (C) the date on which the constitutional right asserted was initially recognized by the Supreme Court, if the right has been newly recognized by the Supreme Court and made retroactively applicable to cases on collateral review; or
  - (D) the date on which the factual predicate of the claim or claims presented could have been discovered through the exercise of due diligence.

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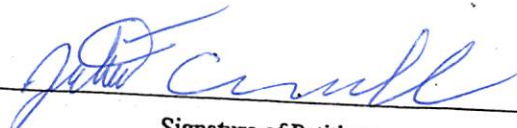
- (2) The time during which a properly filed application for State post-conviction or other collateral review with respect to the pertinent judgment or claim is pending shall not be counted toward any period of limitation under this subsection.

Therefore, petitioner asks that the Court grant the following relief: vacate the conviction for insufficient evidence, reverse and remand on the ground that Mr. Cornell is in custody in violation of the Constitution, order an evidentiary Hearing, or any other relief to which petitioner may be entitled.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Attorney (if any)

I declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus was placed in the prison mailing system on 8/31/2021 (month, date, year).

Executed (signed) on 8/31/2021 (date).

  
Signature of Petitioner

If the person signing is not petitioner, state relationship to petitioner and explain why petitioner is not signing this petition.